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THE GULL

MONTHLY BULLETIN

Volume 55 Berkeley, California March 1973 Number 3

AUSTRALIAN WILDLIFE FILMS

AS A PREVIEW of the Golden Gate Audubon Ecological Tour to Australia next fall, a series of films on Australian wildlife, compliments of Qantas and the Australian National Tourist Office, will be shown at the March general meeting. Kangaroos, koalas, duck-billed platypus, wombats, and various other unique and strange creatures from Down Under will be seen. Exotic birds, including the Lyrebird, with its magnificent tail display, and the Brolga Crane, noted for its comic and intricate breeding dances, will perform on the screen. A special film on the birds and marine life of the Great Barrier Reef provides insight into one of the natural wonders of the world. George Peyton, the tour leader, will introduce the films and give a brief summary of the tour.

The meeting will be held at **7:30 P.M.** on **Thursday, March 8th** at the Hall of Flowers, Golden Gate Park, San Francesco.

PETER WHITE, *Program Chairman.*

OAKLAND CHRISTMAS COUNT

THE OAKLAND COUNT DAY, December 17, 1972 was rainy; temperatures ranged from 40° to 47°; wind variable, 0 to 20 mph. *Compiler*: Alan Pistorius. *Totals*: 170 species, 112,240 individuals; 104 observers plus 12 others stationed at their feeders.

Common Loon	14	Mallard	713
Arctic Loon	1	Pintail	2,416
Red-throated Loon	23	Green-winged Teal	52
Red-necked Grebe	3	*Blue-winged Teal*	1
Horned Grebe	84	American Widgeon	731
Eared Grebe	40	Shoveler	260
Western Grebe	434	Wood Duck	51
Pied-billed Grebe	145	Redhead	20
Brown Pelican	4	Ring-necked Duck	1
Double-crested Cormorant	648	Canvasback	2,351
Brandt's Cormorant	39	Greater Scaup	197
Pelagic Cormorant	8	Lesser Scaup	689
Great Blue Heron	34	scaup (sp.)	3,142
Green Heron	2	Common Goldeneye	240
Common Egret	23	Barrow's Goldeneye	2
Snowy Egret	65	Bufflehead	155
Black-crowned Night Heron	88	White-winged Scoter	45
Canada Goose	1,438	Surf Scoter	2,398
Snow Goose (tentative)	6	Ruddy Duck	3,149

Hooded Merganser	2
Common Merganser	61
Read-breasted Merganser	57
Turkey Vulture	65
Sharp-shinned Hawk	8
Cooper's Hawk	4
Red-tailed Hawk	38
Ferruginous Hawk	1
Bald Eagle	1
Marsh Hawk	2
Pigeon Hawk	1
Sparrow Hawk	19
California Quail	401
Ring-necked Pheasant	9
Clapper Rail	17
Sora	1
Common Gallinule	1
American Coot	2,544
Semipalmated Plover	91
Snowy Plover	18
Killdeer	450
Black-bellied Plover	919
Ruddy Turnstone	11
Black Turnstone	62
Common Snipe	32
Long-billed Curlew	46
Whimbrel	14
Spotted Sandpiper	15
Wandering Tattler	1
Willet	1,081
Greater Yellowlegs	12
Lesser Yellowlegs	1
Knot	578
Least Sandpiper	384
Dunlin	9,219
Short-billed Dowitcher	13
Long-billed Dowitcher	172
dowitcher (sp.)	1,299
Western Sandpiper	5,721
sandpiper (sp.)	464
Marbled Godwit	1,223
Sanderling	305
American Avocet	1,121
Black-necked Stilt	1
Glaucous-winged Gull	2,899
Western Gull	3,595
Herring Gull	119
California Gull	888
Ring-billed Gull	1,769
Mew Gull	256
Bonaparte's Gull	75
Heermann's Gull	1
gull (sp.)	1,050
Forster's Tern	52
Caspian Tern	2
Common Murre	2
Band-tailed Pigeon	92
Mourning Dove	436
Screech Owl	1
Great Horned Owl	7
Burrowing Owl	7
Short-eared Owl	12
Anna's Hummingbird	356
Rufous Hummingbird	3
Belted Kingfisher	6
Yellow-shafted Flicker	1
Red-shafted Flicker	157
Acorn Woodpecker	11
Yellow-bellied Sapsucker	9
Hairy Woodpecker	2
Downy Woodpecker	9
Nuttall's Woodpecker	21
Black Phoebe	11
Say's Phoebe	1
Western Flycatcher	1
Horned Lark	118
Steller's Jay	320
Scrub Jay	221
Common Crow	1
Chestnut-backed Chickadee	377
Plain Titmouse	75
Common Bushtit	330
White-breasted Nuthatch	16
Red-breasted Nuthatch	39
Brown Creeper	3
Wrentit	124
Winter Wren	3
Bewick's Wren	31
Rock Wren	1
Mockingbird	57
California Thrasher	14
Robin	16,486
Varied Thrush	679
Hermit Thrush	101
Western Bluebird	3
Golden-crowned Kinglet	1
Ruby-crowned Kinglet	78
Water Pipit	183
Cedar Waxwing	482
Loggerhead Shrike	13
Starling	17,433
Hutton's Vireo	2
Myrtle Warbler	3
Audubon's Worbler	24
Townsend's Warbler	6
Yellowthroat	1
House Sparrow	325
Western Meadowlark	512
Red-winged Blackbird	6,045
Tricolored Blackbird	3
Brewer's Blackbird	2,800
Brown-headed Cowbird	3
Western Tanager	2
Evening Grosbeak	19
Purple Finch	19
Cassin's Finch	1
House Finch	1,315
Pine Siskin	493
American Goldfinch	258
Lesser Goldfinch	344

Red Crossbill	4	White-crowned Sparrow	1,404
Rufous-sided Towhee	148	Golden-crowned Sparrow	910
Brown Towhee	700	White-throated Sparrow	3
Savannah Sparrow	41	Fox Sparrow	129
Vesper Sparrow	1	Lincoln's Sparrow	4
Rufous-crowned Sparrow	3	Song Sparrow	188
Slate-colored Junco	1	*Lapland Longspur*	2
Oregon Junco	1,289	*Snow Bunting*	1

Birds seen during the count period, but not on the count day: White Pelican, White-fronted Goose, Gadwall, Cinnamon Teal, *Golden Eagle, Caracara, Black Oystercatcher,* Surfbird, White-throated Swift, *Dipper,* Orange-crowned Warbler, *Palm Warbler, Yellow-headed Blackbid,* and *Harris' Sparrow.*

FIELD OBSERVATIONS

Red-necked Grebe, 2, Jan. 6, Berkeley pier—VR; 2, Jan. 20, Dillon Beach—GGAS trip; Jan. 30, Bodega Bay—JM.

Little Blue Heron, Jan. 7, on slough near Palo Alto Municipal Service Center—TC.

Whistling Swan, 150-200, Dec. 30, 3 mi. north of Pt. Arena on Garcia Riv.—LR; 3, Dec. 30, Bodega Bay—JM; 3, Jan. 14, Berkeley Marina—BSU.

Snow Goose, Dec. 30, Bodega Bay; Jan. 19, Coyote Hills Park—JM, GZ.

Ross' Goose, Jan. 21 Año Nuevo State Reserve, close view & photos—VR, WK, BB, BP, MC.

Blue Goose, 5, Jan. 27, Gray Lodge Refuge—JM, GZ, DB.

Blue-winged Teal, 6, Jan. 2, Palo Alto Baylands—JM.

European Widgeon, 2, Jan. 15, Palo Alto Baylands—BF, EN; Jan. 20—VR, LCB.

Barrow's Goldeneye, Jan. 6, San Leandro Bay—VR, LCB; Jan. 19, near new Bay Park Refuge—BJM; Jan. 14, three still on Lake Merritt—JM.

Harlequin Duck, Jan. 20, Marconi Cove, Tomales Bay—JM; 4 males, Jan. 21, Año Nuevo—VR.

Common Scoter, 20, Jan. 21, Año Nuevo—VR.

Common Merganser female, Dec. 9, Albany dump area—VR, LCB.

Rough-legged Hawk, 3, Jan. 14, Pt Reyes—BF; 1, Jan. 23.

Ferruginous Hawk, Jan. 14, 23, Pt. Reyes—BF.

Golden Eagle, Jan. 4, Lafayette Reservoir—JM; Jan. 23, imm. over UC Botanical Garden—MZ, *et. al.;* 3, Jan. 25, Sunol Park—JM, GZ, DB.

Bald Eagle, Jan. 23, adult still at Tomales Bay—JM.

American Golden Plover, 3, Jan. 14, Pt. Reyes—BF; 2, Jan. 20, Dillon Beach—GGAS trip.

Wandering Tattler, Dec. 9, 17, Berkeley Pier—VR.

Knot, 70, Jan. 24, Albany waterfront; 18, Jan. 31, Alameda South Shore—JM.

Red Phalarope, 250, Jan. 7, Pacific Grove—VR, SB, KB, BB.

Glaucous Gull, Jan. 20, 2nd yr. plumage, Dillon Beach—GGAS trip; Jan. 20, Arcata—DR.

Black-legged Kittiwake imm., Jan. 7, Pacific Grove—VR, SB.

Rhinoceros Auklet, 20, Pt. Pinos; 2, Monterey harbor as close as 75 ft., Jan. 7—VR, SB, KB, BB.

Cassin's Auklet, 4, Jan. 7, Pt. Pinos, Pacific Grove—VR, SB.

Poor-will, Jan. 6 after sunset, Pt. Reyes south of McClure's Beach—JM, GZ.

Rufous Hummingbird, 3 until Dec. 22, Berkeley feeder; 2 from Jan.5 through Jan. 25—VR.

Yellow-shafted Flicker, female, Jan. 6, Pt Reyes—JM, GZ; female, Jan. 23, Jewel Lake, Tilden—DJ, *et. al.* Hybrid flicker, Jan. 6, 10, Mountain View Cemetery, Oakland—VR, JM; Jan. 19, 20, Tilden Park—VR.

Clark's Nutcracker, Jan. 11, Glen Park area, San Francisco—JMa.

Dipper, Jan. 25, Alameda Creek, Sunol Park—JM, GZ, DB.

Northern Shrike, Dec. 30, Bodega Bay—JM, BG, JG, VK.

Evening Grosbeak, Dec. 7 - Jan. 25, Berkeley—VR; 8, Jan. 6, Mountain View Cemetery, Oakland—VR; 17, Jan. 10, Mountain View Cemetery—JM; 25, Jan. 8, Beechwood Dr., Oakland—FF; 8, Jan. 6, Vallejo—VR; 7, Jan. 31, Mountain View Cemetery—JM; 2, Jan. 31, Orinda backyard—JS, SS.

Cassin's Finch, Dec. 17, Berkeley feeder—VR.

Red Crossbill, 3, Jan. 7, Harding Golf Course above Lake Merced, San Francisco—BJM, WP.

Slate-colored Junco, Jan. 4, Pinole garden—IT; Jan. 31, Mountain View Cemetery—JM.

White-throated Sparrow, daily in Dec. & Jan., Berkeley feeder—VR; Jan. 13, Golden Gate Park Arboretum—DS; 2, Jan. 27, Oakland feeder—DO.

Lincoln's Sparrow, Dec. 9, Berkeley Aquatic Park—LCB; 2, Jan. 10, Mountain View Cemetery, Oakland—JM; 2, Jan. 21, Coyote Hills Park—JM, GA.

Lapland Longspur, 3, Dec. 17, Bay Farm Island—SB.

About 200 Cedar Waxwings were killed Jan. 6 along the freeway near Vallejo where berry bushes were planted—VR.

Behavior Notes: During very cold weather, Killdeer were observed in a residential area of San Francisco at 10 p.m. "standing on the metal manhole covers for warmth" and gathering worms on the lawn—CJ. In January Wrentits were feeding at hummingbird feeders in San Rafael and Oakland—AMS, VH.

Observers: Garth Alton, Karen Bailey, Steve Bailey, Laurence C. Binford, Danny Boulter, Bonnie Bowen, Marc Chamberlain, Ted Chandik, Florence Fisher, Bud Fry, Bud Gralapp, Joan Gralapp, Cora Jones, Dannie Jones, Walt Koenig, Vic Krispin, Jane Martin (JMa), Brian J. McCaffery, Joe Morlan (JM), Ecks Nesbitt, Dorothy Orr, Wayne Palsson, Bill Principe, Van Remsen, Don Roberson, Leonard Roth, Joseph Small, Sally Small, Anna Margaret Smith, Dixie Sperling, Inez Troxell, Bertha S. Underhill, Gary Zamzow, Margaret Zeff.—VI HOMEM, *Observations Chairman.*

COVEL'S CONSERVATION CORNER

THE OAKLAND ESTUARY OIL SPILL of January 19th, although due to pure vandalism that might have been prevented, did serve to demonstrate an inter-agency contingency plan for just such disasters. Soon after discovery of the oil-tank spill, the U.S. Coast Guard summoned the Clean Bay task force and ordered the "boots" companies to pick up oiled birds around Government Island, in Brooklyn Basin, and on the adjacent estuary. Department of Fish and Game personnel from a wide area converged on this rescue center and began transferring birds to their Yountville facility, where the living victims were de-oiled and the d.o.a.'s incinerated. Mel Raff, of the International Bird Rescue Research Center of Berkeley, soon reached the scene and set up a first aid station on the island where the diving ducks, coots, and grebes were given preliminary treatment before leaving for Yountville. Other workers from the Center went to Yountville to assist there.

The days immediately following saw the strangest marine task force I've ever witnessed (having missed that part of the Golden Gate tanker spill in January, 1971). Members of this assorted fleet ranged from rowboats, manned by men with dip nets, to oil skimmers, tugs, barges, helicopters, and the powerful U.S. Corps of Engineers bay clean-up craft. Booms of several kinds had been strung across the estuary on the first day. Costs of this herculean operation have been estimated upwards from $500,000.00, which will be paid from a National Contingency Fund through the Coast Guard. And all this started with two tanks of reclaimed oil belonging to a private outfit, which had neither adequate padlocks nor a proper retaining wall.

A panel on falconry held at the Cooper Ornithological Society January meeting in Berkeley turned out the largest attendance and liveliest exchanges of opinion enjoyed by Cooper members for some time. Ray Linder, president of the California Hawking Club, faced a panel of professional ornithologists, federal and state officials, and a largely unfriendly audience. Linder claimed conservation accomplishments by falconers, while Alan Pastorius and John Smail led the attack with the argument that all birds of prey should be allowed to fly free.

Mr. Ben Crabb, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service agent, announced that new federal regulations may soon be implemented in those states

which permit falconry. These rules would set rigid examinations for falconry applicants and maintain regular inspections of licensees, their premises, and their birds. The State of California has long exercised control over legitimate falconers. Because of importation and some smuggling of confusing peregrine subspecies from Canada and abroad, it appears that all possession of peregrines should be banned except perhaps for recognized experiments in captive breeding.

We await with great interest the introduction of a new measure by Senator Beter Behr that would replace S.B. 1177, the ill-fated wildlife protection bill of 1972. We'd like to see a bill that places greater restrictions on the use of toxic baits and poisons by the State Department of Agriculture and Department of Public Health. But livestock and pesticide interests no doubt hope conservationists will once again differ and thereby blow the issue.

PAUL COVEL, *Conservation Chairman.*

MEMORIAL GIFTS

A GIFT was made to the Audubon Canyon Ranch in honor of *Sofie Ryan* by *Blanche Vranna* and in memory of *Mrs. H. T. Thomas* by *Mr. & Mrs. Thomas Oczkewicz.* DR. ALBERT BOLES, *Sanctuary and Memorial Fund Chairman,* 854 Longridge Rd., Oakland 94610 (451-6267).

VARIETIES OF WILDERNESS

THE AUDUBON WILDFIFE FILM for April explores many different kinds of wilderness from southern Michigan to the Everglades, from the Great Plains to the Rockies—grasslands, woods, marshes, and mountains. *Twentieth Century Wilderness* by Thomas A. Sterling features close looks at the Greater Sandhill Crane, black-footed ferret, bison, pronghorn, coyote, grizzly bear, Prarie Chicken, Limpkin, Golden Eagle, elk, moose, bighorn sheep, caribou, and other varieties of wildlife. Film maker Sterling has worked on educational, history, and wildlife films for the Canadian Broadcasting System and classroom use. The film will be shown on *Monday, April* 2 at the Oakland Auditorium Theater, 10th and Fallon Streets, Oakland, California. The film will begin at 8 P.M. Tickets will be available at the door for $1.50.

FIELD TRIPS FOR MARCH

Saturday and **Sunday, March 3** and **4:** HONEY LAKE. See January and February *Gulls* for details.

Saturday, March 10: DRAKE'S ESTERO TRAIL. Meet at **9 A.M.** at the Inverness Store in Inverness. (Park behind the store.) A caravan will leave promptly at **9 A.M.** for the starting point of the trail. Be prepared to walk several miles. It could be muddy. Leader: Aileen Pierson (587-4163). Co-leader: Bruce Schatzman (386-1876).

Sunday, March 11: A different sort of field trip through the OAKLAND MUSEUM'S natural science exhibit. Meet at the redwood burl in the

natural seeienee foyer at **10 A.M.** for "a walk aeross California," whieh will emphasize eeologieal relationships in gencral and birds in partieular. The museum's mounted speeimens are exeellent—almost alive. This is a good way for beginners to learn their birds at elose range. Bring luneh or eat at the muscum eafeteria. After lunch, join leader Trix Maehlis (525-8473) on a bird-walk at nearby Lake Merritt.

Sunday, March 18: LIVERMORE environs. Meet at the flagpole on North Livermore Avenue near the post office at **8:30 A.M.** We will bird at Veteran's Park, Shadow Cliffs Regional Park, and at the Pleasanton fairgrounds for shorebirds. Guest leader: Art Edwards (447-3720) of the Ohlone ehapter.

Sunday, March 25: KIRBY COVE and FORT CRONKHITE. Cross the Golden Gate Bridge, take Alexander exit at the north end of the bridge, turn left in about ⅛ of a mile. Wait in the parking lot at the east end of the tunnel. (DO NOT GO THROUGH THE TUNNEL.) We will caravan to the starting point promptly at **9 A.M.** Be perpared to walk a mile or more. Leader: Pat Triggs (664-8502).

The usual no-leader trips will be held at Tilden Park on **Thursday, March 8** and at Golden Gate Park on **Wednesday, March 28.** Tilden: meet at **9 A.M.** at the Little Farm. Golden Gate: meet at **9 A.M.** at the Aeademy of Seienees.

Sunday, April 8: STEVENS CREEK in Santa Clara County. Take highway 280 south to Stevens Creek Boulevard. Exit, drive west for about one mile, and follow signs to the park. Meet in the parking lot at the dam at **8 A.M.** Driving time: 1¼ hours. Leader: Raymond Higgs (355-6264).

NOTE: All spring and summer field trips will begin at **8 A.M.** unless noted otherwise. If you plan to go to Yosemite on **June 2** and **3,** make your reservations now with the Yosemite Park and Curry Company, Yosemite National Park. Approximate rates: campsites—$4.00; tent-cabins—$6.00; eabins without bath—$6.50; eabins with bath—$15.00; hotel—$17.00.
PAT TRIGGS, *Field Trips Chairman.*

HERONS AND EGRETS MAKE OUT BETTER

HELEN PRATT, who has eonducted a breeding eensus of the Great Blue Herons and Common Egrets at Audubon Canyon Ranch for the last six years, reported in the December issue of the *Point Reyes Bird Observatory Newsletter* that "both species reproduced better, the breeding population inereased, and there was a heartening deerease in egg loss." In the past three years the loss of eggs due to breaking and the low pereentage of fledglings per nest had alarmed conservationists and birders, who feared that pestieide residues were responsible for the low reproduetive suceess. In 1972, 46 breeding pairs of Great Blue Herons fledged just over 100 young, and 96 pairs of Common Egrets fledged 192 young. We all hope that the birds continue to enjoy increased suceess under the faithful, eneouraging eye of Helen Pratt.

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MARCH THE GULL 1973

GOLDEN GATE AUDUBON SOCIETY, INC.

Established January 25, 1917 A Branch of the National Audubon Society since 1948

President	Mrs. Richard F. Johnson	1127 El Centro Ave., Oakland 94602	530-7118
Vice President	Raymond Higgs	340 Espanada Apt. 20, Pacifica 94044	355-6264
Vice President	Mrs. Harold Rosegay	540-A Presidio Blvd., Pres of S.F. 94129	561-2889
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Corresponding Secretary	Mrs. Robert C. Johnsen	4 Del Valle, Orinda 94563	254-3919
Director	Mr. Carl W. Kindt	3840 Quail Ridge Rd. Lafayette 94549	284-2039
Director	Mrs. Leonard Machlis	1871 Thousand Oaks Bl., Berkeley 94707	525-8473
Director	Mrs. Donald H. McLaughlin	1450 Hawthorne Ter., Berkeley 94708	848-0699
Editor	Steve Whitney	6718 Heartwood Dr., Oakland 94611	339-1059
Program Chairman	Peter White	24900 Santa Clara Ave., Hayward 94544	782-3505
Observations Chairman	Mrs. George Homem	6911 Armour Dr., Oakland 94611	339-1886
Field Trips Chairman	Miss Patricia Triggs	2038-33rd Ave., San Francisco 94116	664-8502
Membership Chairman	Miss Aileen Pierson	810 Gonzales Dr., San Francisco 94132	587-4163
Membership Secretary	Mrs. Alan Pistorius	2642 Russell St., Berkeley 94705	843-2222
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Publicity Chairman	Ms. Dolores Johnson	425 Lee Street #34, Oakland 94610	832-6504
BAAC Delegate	Mr. Joshua Barkin	Tilden Park Nature Area, Berkeley 94708	524-2495

Send address changes to Membership Secretary promptly; Post Office does not forward *THE GULL*. Monthly meetings—second Thursday 7:30 p.m. Joint membership—Local & National $12 per year, (individual); $15 (family); includes *AUDUBON MAGAZINE* and *THE GULL*. Subscriptions to *THE GULL* separately $2 per year. High school & college student membership $6 per year.

The *Gull* deadline is the first of the month for the following month.